

This Week in Congress

May 24, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." This week's headlines are:

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Senate Passes Financial Regulation Legislation

On Thursday, the Senate passed financial regulation legislation. While I am in favor of fixing the problem of “too big to fail” institutions, I believe this bill fails to focus on Wall Street firms, which were the root of the financial meltdown. Instead, this bill adds additional regulations on small community financial institutions, which were not the cause of the financial crisis. This bill will only restrict these small institutions’ ability to lend to small businesses, which will slow our economic recovery.

This bill must now be reconciled with a different House passed measure to produce a final measure. I will continue to work to improve this bill and make sure that this measure addresses the issues at Wall Street while not causing new ones for main street.

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Providing Tax Relief to Public Safety Officers

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) finalized a regulation this week to extend tax relief to public safety officers who drive government vehicles. Previously, first responders such as emergency medical services (EMS) personnel were taxed for driving government vehicles to and from work while they were on call. Many public safety officers in Kansas are on call 24 hours a day and need ready access to their vehicles at home so they can respond to emergencies at a moment's notice. Unfortunately, the tax code had penalized these responders, resulting in longer emergency response times, especially in rural communities where long distances are driven. To remedy this unfair treatment, I requested the IRS consider the use of emergency worker vehicles as a working condition benefit, similar to police and fire vehicles.

The new IRS regulation, effective this week, will provide EMS, rescue crews, and other emergency workers the same exemption from commuting taxes as police and fire officers receive. I am pleased these professionals will now be able to perform their job without interference from the IRS. [Click here](#) to read more about this issue.

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Honoring America's Five-Star Generals

This week, the House of Representatives unanimously passed legislation sponsored by the Kansas delegation to honor America's five-star generals and to enhance education programs at the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in Fort Leavenworth. The Five-Star General's Commemorative Coin Act directs the U.S. Mint to create a coin in recognition of the five generals who attained the rank of General of the Army: George Marshall, Douglas MacArthur, Dwight Eisenhower, Henry "Hap" Arnold, and Omar Bradley. Each of these men was an alumnus of the CGSC. The proceeds of the commemorative coin will help fund the CGSC Foundation, which supports a variety of educational programs at the College.

With no shortage of threats today from around the world, our country is demanding much from those who serve in uniform. Our service members deserve the best education and training to accomplish these missions. This legislation both honors alumni of the CGSC, and helps the College continue its vital mission of professional military education. [Click here](#) to watch my speech to the House of Representatives about this legislation and [click here](#) to read more.

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House Passes Resolution Honoring Emporia State Women's Basketball Team

On Wednesday, the House of Representatives approved legislation I introduced to honor the Emporia State University (ESU) Lady Hornets basketball team as NCAA Division II National Champions. The legislation, H. Res. 1292, was approved by a vote of 407-1.

On March 26, 2010, the ESU Lady Hornets defeated the Fort Lewis Skyhawks by a score of 65-53 in St. Joseph, Missouri to capture the school's first ever women's basketball national championship. The Lady Hornets finished the season with 30 wins and 5 losses, one of the best records in school history. Since the victory, Head Coach Schneider has been named head coach at Stephen F. Austin University, a Division I school in Nacogdoches, Texas, and former Assistant Coach Jory Collins has been named head coach of the Lady Hornets. Kansans, especially those at Emporia State University, will miss Coach Schneider and his family. I wish Coach Schneider and Coach Collins the best in their new roles. [Click here](#) to watch a speech I delivered to the House of Representatives to recognize this accomplishment and the value of teamwork.

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Law Enforcement Officers Protect Kansas Communities

Kansas law enforcement officers deserve our gratitude for their service to keep our communities safe. On Friday, I attended an awards banquet at the 2010 Joint Kansas Law Enforcement Conference in Hutchinson to recognize Kansas law enforcement officers for their heroic work in the line of duty. The conference is sponsored by the Kansas Peace Officers Association, the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police and the Kansas Sheriff's Association.

Awards were given during the banquet to law enforcement officers for going above and beyond the call of duty and for extraordinary action that contributed to the significant prolonging or saving of a life. Kansas Highway Patrol Trooper Michael Butler; Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Special Agents Mike Jones, Stephen Gravatt and Douglas Monty; Sedgwick County Sheriff's Deputies Joseph Greene, Jefferey Smith and Alan Bennett; and Wichita Police Officer Aaron Mattson were given the Gold Award for their bravery in response to a shooting that killed Sedgwick County Sheriff Deputy Brian Etheridge on September 28, 2009 in Wichita. Deputy Etheridge was ambushed by a convicted felon as he responded to a larceny complaint. Deputy Etheridge made the ultimate sacrifice while working to protect the people of Sedgwick County. In honor of his service, he was awarded the Chief's Award, which was accepted by his widow Sarah.

I was honored to spend an evening with Kansas law enforcement officers, including former Kansas Bureau of Investigation Director Larry Welch, who completed a congressional fellowship with me in 2008. Thanks to Doyle King for the invitation to attend.

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Visiting Webco Manufacturing in Olathe

On Monday, I visited Webco Manufacturing, headquartered in Olathe. Webco offers clients a full range of equipment and services, such as aviation ground support, custom air handling and cooling equipment, structural products, construction equipment, and waste water treatment. During a tour of the shop, I visited with the Webco management team about their concerns with the shrinking manufacturing sector in the United States. Employment at Webco has fallen almost 40% in the last two years alone. We must create a business environment in the U.S. that will sustain this industry and allow it to grow. I appreciate hearing these concerns directly from Kansans, as it helps me better serve them in Congress. Thanks to Vice President Mike Johnson for arranging the visit and to the Webco team for their hospitality.

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Visiting with Lincoln Residents

On Friday, I visited local businesses and spoke with community members in Lincoln. I enjoyed discussing current events in Congress with residents at Lincoln County Pharmacy, the courthouse, Workman Chiropractic Clinic, the post office, the USDA service center, Farm Bureau Financial Services, Lincoln Grocery, Village Lines, the Lincoln Sentinel and Metz Law Firm. Spending time in rural towns across Kansas reminds me of what I loved about growing up in a rural town – the sense of community. Thanks to the residents of Lincoln for their kind

hospitality during my visit.

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Celebrating 73 Years of Marriage

This weekend, my parents, Ray and Madeline Moran, celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary. To celebrate this special occasion, my family and I attended United Methodist Church on Sunday with my parents in my hometown of Plainville and enjoyed a potluck lunch afterwards with friends. I'd like to thank our longtime church family for their support and friendship, especially Lynn Carmichael and Verlene LeRock.

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In the Office

Tami Schwindt of Garden City and Lesli Girard of Topeka were in with Families Together, Inc. to update me on the organization's work to help families with disabled children. Steve Barnhart of Wichita and Sandy Borne of El Dorado were in with the Kansas Rural Letter Carriers Association to express their opposition to reducing a day of U.S. Postal Service mail delivery.

The Organization for the Promotion and Advancement of Small Telecommunication Companies (OPASTCO) was in to discuss the National Broadband Plan and the importance of making certain rural Kansas is not left behind. Members in with the group were: Steve Davis of Medicine Lodge, Dennis Doyle of Marysville, Brian Boisvert of Wilson, Mike Foster of Miltonvale, Ben Foster of Clay Center, Larry Sevier of Lenora and Tom Gleason of Lawrence.

Dr. John Lohnes of Wichita was in with the American College of Radiology to advocate higher Medicare payments to physicians. Dr. Donna E. Sweet of Wichita and Dr. Scott Smiley of Emporia were in with the American College of Physicians to talk about funding for health care professionals and the flawed Medicare Physician formula.

Mary Burns of Kansas City, Brett Gordon of Olathe and Reed Garrett of Leawood were in with the Kansas City chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation to talk with me about programs the federal government supports for research into juvenile diabetes. Kansas Insurance Commissioner Sandy Praeger of Topeka was in to report on the effects of current House legislation on the NAIC and Kansas Insurance companies.

Dan Senestraro of Johnson, David Meyer of Olathe, and Travis Heiman of Kansas City were in with the Dairy Farmers of America to talk about the future of the dairy safety net in the next farm bill and workforce issues. Ed Cross of Topeka, and David Murfin of Wichita were in with the Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association to express concerns with the President's budget and to speak about regulation of hydraulic fracturing.

Kansans in this week for a tour of the U.S. Capitol building included Karen Aten, Sheri Stone, and Doug and Karen Hendrickson of Hays.

Contact Me

It is an honor to serve you in Washington, D.C. Please let me know how I can be of assistance. To send me an email, [click here](#). You can also [click here](#) to contact me through one of my Kansas offices or my Washington, D.C., office.

Very truly yours,

Jerry